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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4959
INFO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0601
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 4094
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 0333
RHMFISS/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU PRIORITY
RHMFISS/425ABS IZMIR TU//CC// PRIORITY
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA/DSCA// PRIORITY

S E C R E T ANKARA 002153

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/19/2031

TAGS: [PTER](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY WORRIED ABOUT PKK'S SMUGGLING ARMS FROM IRAQ

Classified By: DCM Nancy McEldowney for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) This is an action request -- see para 7.

12. (S) Summary: MFA requests the USG investigate the loss of 617 handguns that were intended for Iraqi government use and that ended up in criminals' hands in Turkey. Two people have been killed with these weapons, including the Italian priest who was shot in Trabzon last February. We request Washington's assistance in responding to the GOT. End summary.

13. (S) MFA Assistant Secretary-equivalent DG Hayati Guven convoked us on April 18 to request the USG investigate the smuggling of arms from Iraq into Turkey. He explained that gun smuggling has increased steadily over the past two years which he said was due to the "power vacuum prevailing" in northern Iraq. Turkish authorities have seized the following weapons in Turkey and derived their origins with the help of their manufacturers:

-- 610 GLOCK handguns, 460 of which were part of two lots sold to CPA in September 2003 and June 2005, and intended for the Iraqi Interior Ministry;

-- 5 Walther handguns, 3 of which were part of a lot of 6000 sold to a Polish company, BUMAR, with the final destination of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense; and the other 2 were part of a lot of 1175 shipped between January and June 2004 to "CPA Contracting Activity;" and

-- 2 SIG SAUER handguns sold to the US-based firm "SIG ARMS, Exceter" and transferred to Iraq.

14. (S) Guven noted that one of the GLOCKs smuggled from Iraq had been used in the February 5 shooting of an Italian priest in the Black Sea city of Trabzon. In Izmir, a policeman was killed and another wounded by one of the Walthers. Turkish authorities had previously requested the FBI's help in investigating the GLOCKs, but were dissatisfied that the answer they received was only conveyed orally and only confirmed the general information the Turks had already gathered on their own.

15. (S) Guven emphasized that terrorists, including the PKK, use gun-running as a source of income. He said Turkey understood that these weapons were provided to Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq who then handed them over to the

PKK for their illegal sale in Turkey. Now they are being used by criminals here. He asked the US to investigate and to share its findings with Turkish authorities urgently.

¶16. (S) We undertook to relay the request to Washington. We warned Guven that the black market for weapons in Iraq was a much larger issue than the 617 handguns discovered in Turkey; tracing these specific weapons would be a difficult and time-consuming task. He took the point, but argued that these were not run-of-the-mill handguns but quality firearms.

¶17. (S) Comment and action request: Guven was clearly acting under instructions, most likely originating with the Turkish National Police or the National Intelligence Agency (MIT). The high profile nature of the crimes committed with some of these weapons has added to the urgency (and formality) of the GOT request. We request Washington agencies' assistance in responding to the Turkish request. End comment and action request.

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